

## NEWS:

### KLAATU'S IDENTITY STILL A MYSTERY WHILE SALES AND AIRPLAY SKYROCKET

HOLLYWOOD, March 30, 1977 - The identity of Klaatu, Capitol's "mystery group," remains unknown as more and more radio stations across the country air the album and the just-released single, both of which have jumped on the national pop charts.

Numerous journalists and radio announcers have asserted that Klaatu is either The Beatles in their cleverest disguise yet, or one or more members of the former "Fab Four." The controversy continues to rage with strong opinions and forceful commentary by both those who believe it and those who don't. However, even the skeptics admit that several Klaatu tunes sound like 1967-68 Beatles.

The Klaatu album was released in August, 1976, with little fanfare. Purchased by Capitol as a completed master recording, the label agreed to release it because of the quality and commercial sound of the music even though Klaatu's representative, Frank Davies, refused to divulge any information about the band which he said wanted its music to stand on its own merit.

The album slowly gained nationwide recognition in the press with many critics pointing out similarities to other groups. Finally, earlier this year, Steve Smith, an editorial assistant for a Rhode Island newspaper (The Providence Journal), wrote a feature headlined "Is Klaatu The Beatles?" which analyzed in detail the group's music, name and lyrics and pointed out numerous possible



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hidden meanings.

Both the AM and FM radio stations in Providence began to play several cuts from the album and even interviewed Smith on-the-air. Phonecall response was extraordinary and local record stores quickly ran out of stock. Soon other stations in the New England area caught wind of what was happening, added the album to playlists and began to run special promotions. Capitol rushed 10,000 albums to meet the demand in the East. In the next few weeks, Klaatu's music was being aired and was selling strongly in major markets across the country such as Akron, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Miami, Minneapolis, Nashville, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Jose and St. Louis. Capitol's manufacturing plants worked overtime to press and package more than 100,000 albums to fill orders throughout the nation. By the last week in March, Klaatu was selling more copies than any other album in Cleveland, Hartford, Indianapolis and Providence.

AM stations were asking for a single so Capitol rush-released the double "A"-sided single "Sub-Rosa Subway"/"Calling Occupants" on March 21. It immediately received heavy Top 40 airplay in Louisville, Nashville, New Haven, New Orleans and San Jose. Many AM stations began running promotions such as "Guess Who Is Klaatu" in markets such as Atlanta, Hartford, Miami and Pittsburgh.

Klaatu is even being featured on television. Arty Goodman did a two-day special on the group on WATL-TV in Atlanta. He told his viewers about the Klaatu phenomenon and played a half dozen of the

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songs. He reports being barraged by phone calls with at least 50 people telling him they went right out and bought the album. He is presently planning another show about Klaatu.

In addition, the unsolicited media explosion on the band has also surfaced in Canada and Australia. The Beatle-sound-alike controversy is beginning to cause a great deal of interest in England as well.

Meanwhile, amateur sleuths everywhere have been looking for clues to Klaatu's identity (the album only shows that Klaatu wrote and produced the eight tunes).

Davies recently said the morse code message at the end of "Sub-Rosa Subway" contains clues. A midwest radio station claims it decodes to say "From Alfred/Heed thy sharpened ears/Message we do bring/Starship appears upon our sphere/Through London sky comes Spring." The song itself describes Alfred Beach's struggles to build America's first subway in New York City about 1870 while the public scoffed.

The name Klaatu was taken from the 1951 sci-fi movie "The Day The Earth Stood Still" which had a peace emissary from outer-space. Klaatu was one of the main characters in the movie (played by Michael Rennie). On Ringo Starr's Goodnight Vienna album, the drummer is seen on the cover standing next to the spaceship from the movie and dressed like Klaatu (which is one of the main reasons many feel there is a Beatles connection). Smith, the Rhode

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Island reporter, claims that just before Paul McCartney left the stage in Boston last summer during the "Wings Over America Tour," he said, "See you when the earth stands still." Other writers have pointed out that in the movie, when the creature from space is asked where he's from, he says "Venus and Mars" (the title of one of McCartney's albums).

Smith's collection of clues is growing. He says, "On George Harrison's latest album, there is a sun that matches the one on the Klaatu album. On a Wings album, Paul McCartney thanks two guys by the names of Ken and Terry. Two fellows at Toronto Sound, where Klaatu records, are named Ken Morris and Terry Brown."

Klaatu believes in interplanetary communication and space exploration, according to their lyrics and their manager. The song "Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft" has Klaatu declaring a "World Contact Day" and asking the listener to concentrate and assist in sending peaceful messages into space. Through Davies, the members of Klaatu have explained the song by saying "the discovery of a disc from another era reveals (musically and lyrically) the cultural and social changes experienced over a certain period in the history of the planet Earth." The song opens with the sounds of something tramping through underbrush and then a phonograph needle being placed on a record. Is that disc from another era an old Beatles record? There were plenty of cultural and social changes in those days. Perhaps the disc is simply the Klaatu

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album itself with its music crafted to resemble that of another era.

Smith points out that a quote on John Lennon's Wall and Bridges album says, "On August 29, 1973, I saw a flying saucer."

The mystery continues. However, Davies says, "No one dreamed this up as any sort of a promotional gimmick. It was none of our doing. The main thing is the music. If everyone thought the album was lousy, then no one would care who they are."

Ray Tusken, Capitol's National AOR (Album Oriented Rock) Promotion Manager, echoes the thought. "It always boils down to what's in the grooves. The music is good and people are enjoying listening to it, which is all that really matters. A lot of people in the world really want to see The Beatles get back together again. When an unidentified group comes along that sounds like The Beatles, naturally it's going to cause quite a stir. A lot of radio programmers have told us that they haven't had so much fun with a promotion, a record or a rumor in years. Another thing is that every week more stations report that listeners are calling in to request songs by Klaatu and they're not just saying 'play that group that sounds like The Beatles'."

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